

1 E. MARTIN ESTRADA  
United States Attorney  
2 DAVID T. RYAN  
Assistant United States Attorney  
3 Chief, National Security Division  
DAVID C. LACHMAN (Cal. Bar No. 261711)  
4 Assistant United States Attorney  
Terrorism and Export Crimes Section  
5 1500 United States Courthouse  
312 North Spring Street  
6 Los Angeles, California 90012  
Telephone: (213) 894-5564  
7 Facsimile: (213) 894-2927  
E-mail: david.lachman@usdoj.gov  
8

Attorneys for Plaintiff  
9 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

10 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

11 FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

12 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

13 Plaintiff,

14 v.

15 STEVE JAIMES,

16 Defendant.

No. CR 2:24-CR-00745-JWH

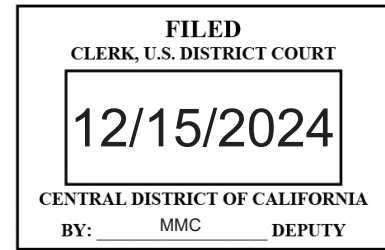
PLEA AGREEMENT FOR DEFENDANT  
STEVE JAIMES

17  
18 1. This constitutes the plea agreement between STEVE JAIMES  
19 ("defendant") and the United States Attorney's Office for the Central  
20 District of California (the "USAO") in the above-captioned case.  
21 This agreement is limited to the USAO and cannot bind any other  
22 federal, state, local, or foreign prosecuting, enforcement,  
23 administrative, or regulatory authorities.

24 DEFENDANT'S OBLIGATIONS

25 2. Defendant agrees to:

26 a. Give up the right to indictment by a grand jury and,  
27 at the earliest opportunity requested by the USAO and provided by the  
28 Court, appear and plead guilty to a single-count information in the



1 form attached to this agreement as Exhibit A or a substantially  
2 similar form, which charges defendant with distribution of N-phenyl-  
3 N-[1-(2-phenylethyl)-4-piperidinyl] propanamide ("fentanyl"), a  
4 Schedule II narcotic drug controlled substance, in violation of 21  
5 U.S.C. §§ 841(a)(1), (b)(1)(C).

6 b. Not contest facts agreed to in this agreement.

7 c. Abide by all agreements regarding sentencing contained  
8 in this agreement.

9 d. Appear for all court appearances, surrender as ordered  
10 for service of sentence, obey all conditions of any bond, and obey  
11 any other ongoing court order in this matter.

12 e. Not commit any crime; however, offenses that would be  
13 excluded for sentencing purposes under United States Sentencing  
14 Guidelines ("U.S.S.G." or "Sentencing Guidelines") § 4A1.2(c) are not  
15 within the scope of this agreement.

16 f. Be truthful at all times with the United States  
17 Probation and Pretrial Services Office and the Court.

18 g. Pay the applicable special assessment at or before the  
19 time of sentencing unless defendant has demonstrated a lack of  
20 ability to pay such assessments.

21 THE USAO'S OBLIGATIONS

22 3. The USAO agrees to:

23 a. Not contest facts agreed to in this agreement.

24 b. Abide by all agreements regarding sentencing contained  
25 in this agreement.

26 c. At the time of sentencing, provided that defendant  
27 demonstrates an acceptance of responsibility for the offense up to  
28 and including the time of sentencing, recommend a two-level reduction

1 in the applicable Sentencing Guidelines offense level, pursuant to  
2 U.S.S.G. § 3E1.1, and recommend and, if necessary, move for an  
3 additional one-level reduction if available under that section.

4 d. Recommend that defendant be sentenced to a term of  
5 imprisonment no higher than the low end of the applicable Sentencing  
6 Guidelines range, provided that the offense level used by the Court  
7 to determine that range is 25 or higher. For purposes of this  
8 agreement, the low end of the Sentencing Guidelines range is that  
9 defined by the Sentencing Table in U.S.S.G. Chapter 5, Part A.

10 NATURE OF THE OFFENSE

11 4. Defendant understands that for defendant to be guilty of  
12 the crime charged in count one of the information, that is,  
13 distribution of fentanyl, in violation of 21 U.S.C. §§ 841(a)(1),  
14 (b)(1)(C), the following must be true: (1) defendant knowingly  
15 distributed fentanyl; and (2) defendant knew that it was fentanyl or  
16 some other federally controlled substance.

17 PENALTIES

18 5. Defendant understands that the statutory maximum sentence  
19 that the Court can impose for a violation of 21 U.S.C. §§ 841(a)(1),  
20 (b)(1)(C): twenty years' imprisonment; a lifetime period of  
21 supervised release; a fine of \$1,000,000 or twice the gross gain or  
22 gross loss resulting from the offense, whichever is greatest; and a  
23 mandatory special assessment of \$100.

24 6. Defendant understands that, if the Court imposes a term of  
25 imprisonment for a violation of Title 21, United States Code,  
26 Sections 841(a)(1), (b)(1)(C), the Court must impose a statutory  
27 mandatory minimum of at least a three-year period of supervised  
28 release to follow a term of imprisonment.

1           7. Defendant understands that supervised release is a period  
2 of time following imprisonment during which defendant will be subject  
3 to various restrictions and requirements. Defendant understands that  
4 if defendant violates one or more of the conditions of any supervised  
5 release imposed, defendant may be returned to prison for all or part  
6 of the term of supervised release authorized by statute for the  
7 offense that resulted in the term of supervised release, which could  
8 result in defendant serving a total time of imprisonment greater than  
9 the statutory maximum stated above.

10           8. Defendant understands that under 21 U.S.C. § 862a,  
11 defendant will not be eligible for assistance under state programs  
12 funded under the Social Security Act or Federal Food Stamp Act or for  
13 federal food stamp program benefits, and that any such benefits or  
14 assistance received by defendant's family members will be reduced to  
15 reflect defendant's ineligibility.

16           9. Defendant understands that, by pleading guilty, defendant  
17 may be giving up valuable government benefits and valuable civic  
18 rights, such as the right to vote, the right to possess a firearm,  
19 the right to hold office, and the right to serve on a jury.  
20 Defendant understands that he is pleading guilty to a felony and that  
21 it is a federal crime for a convicted felon to possess a firearm or  
22 ammunition. Defendant understands that the conviction in this case  
23 may also subject defendant to various other collateral consequences,  
24 including but not limited to revocation of probation, parole, or  
25 supervised release in another case and suspension or revocation of a  
26 professional license. Defendant understands that unanticipated  
27 collateral consequences will not serve as grounds to withdraw  
28 defendant's guilty plea.

1           10. Defendant and his counsel have discussed the fact that, and  
2 defendant understands that, if defendant is not a United States  
3 citizen, the conviction in this case makes it practically inevitable  
4 and a virtual certainty that defendant will be removed or deported  
5 from the United States. Defendant may also be denied United States  
6 citizenship and admission to the United States in the future.  
7 Defendant understands that while there may be arguments that  
8 defendant can raise in immigration proceedings to avoid or delay  
9 removal, removal is presumptively mandatory and a virtual certainty  
10 in this case. Defendant further understands that removal and  
11 immigration consequences are the subject of a separate proceeding and  
12 that no one, including his attorney or the Court, can predict to an  
13 absolute certainty the effect of his conviction on his immigration  
14 status. Defendant nevertheless affirms that he wants to plead guilty  
15 regardless of any immigration consequences that his plea may entail,  
16 even if the consequence is automatic removal from the United States.

17                               FACTUAL BASIS

18           11. Defendant admits that defendant is, in fact, guilty of the  
19 offense to which defendant is agreeing to plead guilty. Defendant  
20 and the USAO agree to the statement of facts provided below and agree  
21 that this statement of facts is sufficient to support a plea of  
22 guilty to the charge described in this agreement and to establish the  
23 Sentencing Guidelines factors set forth in paragraph 13 below but is  
24 not meant to be a complete recitation of all facts relevant to the  
25 underlying criminal conduct or all facts known to either party that  
26 relate to that conduct.

27           On or about March 16, 2023, in Los Angeles County, within the  
28 Central District of California, defendant knowingly and intentionally

1 distributed fentanyl, a Schedule II narcotic drug controlled  
2 substance. At all relevant times, defendant knew that the substance  
3 he distributed was fentanyl.

4 Specifically, during the weeks of March 6 and March 13, 2023, a  
5 drug broker in Mexico arranged to sell 10,000 fentanyl pills for  
6 \$4,800 to a purported drug buyer who, in fact, was a confidential  
7 source ("CS-1") working on behalf of law enforcement. On March 15,  
8 2023, the drug broker confirmed that the transaction would take place  
9 on March 16, 2023, stated that he would provide CS-1's phone number  
10 to the courier who would deliver the fentanyl pills, and instructed  
11 CS-1 to give \$3,300 to the courier and transfer the remaining \$1,500  
12 to one of the drug broker's associates. On March 16, 2023, defendant  
13 called CS-1 to coordinate the fentanyl sale, which defendant and CS-1  
14 agreed would take place later that day in Downey, California. CS-1  
15 told defendant that one of CS-1's associates, who in fact was another  
16 confidential source ("CS-2") working on behalf of law enforcement,  
17 would meet defendant to pick up the fentanyl. At approximately 1:08  
18 p.m. on March 16, 2023, defendant arrived at the agreed-upon location  
19 and gave CS-2 a brown box containing approximately 10,000 fentanyl  
20 pills. In exchange, CS-2 gave defendant \$3,300 in cash and  
21 transferred the remaining \$1,500 to one of the drug broker's  
22 associates. In total, defendant distributed approximately 1,001  
23 grams of a mixture or substance containing a detectable amount of  
24 fentanyl.

25 SENTENCING FACTORS

26 12. Defendant understands that in determining defendant's  
27 sentence the Court is required to calculate the applicable Sentencing  
28 Guidelines range and to consider that range, possible departures

1 under the Sentencing Guidelines, and the other sentencing factors set  
2 forth in 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a). Defendant understands that the  
3 Sentencing Guidelines are advisory only, that defendant cannot have  
4 any expectation of receiving a sentence within the calculated  
5 Sentencing Guidelines range, and that after considering the  
6 Sentencing Guidelines and the other § 3553(a) factors, the Court will  
7 be free to exercise its discretion to impose any sentence it finds  
8 appropriate between the mandatory minimum and up to the maximum set  
9 by statute for the crimes of conviction.

10 13. Defendant and the USAO agree to the following applicable  
11 Sentencing Guidelines factors:

12 Base Offense Level: 30 U.S.S.G. §§ 2D1.1(a)(5),  
13 (c)(5)

14 Minor participant: -2 U.S.S.G. § 3B1.2(b)

15 Defendant and the USAO reserve the right to argue that additional  
16 specific offense characteristics, adjustments, and departures under  
17 the Sentencing Guidelines are appropriate.

18 14. Defendant understands that there is no agreement as to  
19 defendant's criminal history or criminal history category.

20 15. Defendant and the USAO reserve the right to argue for a  
21 sentence outside the sentencing range established by the Sentencing  
22 Guidelines based on the factors set forth in 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a)(1),  
23 (a)(2), (a)(3), (a)(6), and (a)(7).

24 WAIVER OF CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS

25 16. Defendant understands that by pleading guilty, defendant  
26 gives up the following rights:

- 27 a. The right to persist in a plea of not guilty.  
28 b. The right to a speedy and public trial by jury.

1 c. The right to be represented by counsel -- and if  
2 necessary have the Court appoint counsel -- at trial. Defendant  
3 understands, however, that, defendant retains the right to be  
4 represented by counsel -- and if necessary have the Court appoint  
5 counsel -- at every other stage of the proceeding.

6 d. The right to be presumed innocent and to have the  
7 burden of proof placed on the government to prove defendant guilty  
8 beyond a reasonable doubt.

9 e. The right to confront and cross-examine witnesses  
10 against defendant.

11 f. The right to testify and to present evidence in  
12 opposition to the charges, including the right to compel the  
13 attendance of witnesses to testify.

14 g. The right not to be compelled to testify, and, if  
15 defendant chose not to testify or present evidence, to have that  
16 choice not be used against defendant.

17 h. Any and all rights to pursue any affirmative defenses,  
18 Fourth Amendment or Fifth Amendment claims, and other pretrial  
19 motions that have been filed or could be filed.

20 WAIVER OF APPEAL OF CONVICTION; WAIVER OF COLLATERAL ATTACK

21 17. Defendant understands that, with the exception of an appeal  
22 based on a claim that defendant's guilty plea was involuntary, by  
23 pleading guilty defendant is waiving and giving up any right to  
24 appeal defendant's conviction on the offense to which defendant is  
25 pleading guilty. Defendant understands that this waiver includes,  
26 but is not limited to, arguments that the statute to which defendant  
27 is pleading guilty is unconstitutional, and any and all claims that  
28



1 the statement of facts provided herein is insufficient to support  
2 defendant's plea of guilty.

3 18. Defendant also gives up any right to bring a post-  
4 conviction collateral attack on the conviction or sentence, except a  
5 post-conviction collateral attack based on a claim of ineffective  
6 assistance of counsel, a claim of newly discovered evidence, or an  
7 explicitly retroactive change in the applicable Sentencing  
8 Guidelines, sentencing statutes, or statutes of conviction.  
9 Defendant understands that this waiver includes, but is not limited  
10 to, arguments that the statute to which defendant is pleading guilty  
11 is unconstitutional, and any and all claims that the statement of  
12 facts provided herein is insufficient to support defendant's plea of  
13 guilty.

14 LIMITED MUTUAL WAIVER OF APPEAL OF SENTENCE

15 19. Defendant agrees that, provided the Court imposes a term of  
16 imprisonment within or below the range corresponding to an offense  
17 level of 25 and the criminal history category calculated by the  
18 Court, defendant gives up the right to appeal all of the following:  
19 (a) the procedures and calculations used to determine and impose any  
20 portion of the sentence; (b) the term of imprisonment imposed by the  
21 Court; (c) the fine imposed by the Court, provided it is within the  
22 statutory maximum; (d) to the extent permitted by law, the  
23 constitutionality or legality of defendant's sentence, provided it is  
24 within the statutory maximum; (e) the term of probation or supervised  
25 release imposed by the Court, provided it is within the statutory  
26 maximum; and (f) any of the following conditions of probation or  
27 supervised release imposed by the Court: the conditions set forth in  
28 Second Amended General Order 20-04 of this Court; the drug testing

1 conditions mandated by 18 U.S.C. §§ 3563(a)(5) and 3583(d); and the  
2 alcohol and drug use conditions authorized by 18 U.S.C. § 3563(b)(7).

3 20. The USAO agrees that, provided (a) all portions of the  
4 sentence are at or below the statutory maximum specified above and  
5 (b) the Court imposes a term of imprisonment within or above the  
6 range corresponding to an offense level of 25 and the criminal  
7 history category calculated by the Court, the USAO gives up its right  
8 to appeal any portion of the sentence.

9 RESULT OF WITHDRAWAL OF GUILTY PLEA

10 21. Defendant agrees that if, after entering a guilty plea  
11 pursuant to this agreement, defendant seeks to withdraw and succeeds  
12 in withdrawing defendant's guilty plea on any basis other than a  
13 claim and finding that entry into this plea agreement was  
14 involuntary, then the USAO will be relieved of all of its obligations  
15 under this agreement.

16 EFFECTIVE DATE OF AGREEMENT

17 22. This agreement is effective upon signature and execution of  
18 all required certifications by defendant, defendant's counsel, and an  
19 Assistant United States Attorney.

20 BREACH OF AGREEMENT

21 23. Defendant agrees that if defendant, at any time after the  
22 signature of this agreement and execution of all required  
23 certifications by defendant, defendant's counsel, and an Assistant  
24 United States Attorney, knowingly violates or fails to perform any of  
25 defendant's obligations under this agreement ("a breach"), the USAO  
26 may declare this agreement breached. All of defendant's obligations  
27 are material, a single breach of this agreement is sufficient for the  
28 USAO to declare a breach, and defendant shall not be deemed to have

1 cured a breach without the express agreement of the USAO in writing.  
2 If the USAO declares this agreement breached, and the Court finds  
3 such a breach to have occurred, then: (a) if defendant has previously  
4 entered a guilty plea pursuant to this agreement, defendant will not  
5 be able to withdraw the guilty plea, and (b) the USAO will be  
6 relieved of all its obligations under this agreement.

7 COURT AND UNITED STATES PROBATION AND PRETRIAL SERVICES

8 OFFICE NOT PARTIES

9 24. Defendant understands that the Court and the United States  
10 Probation and Pretrial Services Office are not parties to this  
11 agreement and need not accept any of the USAO's sentencing  
12 recommendations or the parties' agreements to facts or sentencing  
13 factors.

14 25. Defendant understands that both defendant and the USAO are  
15 free to: (a) supplement the facts by supplying relevant information  
16 to the United States Probation and Pretrial Services Office and the  
17 Court, (b) correct any and all factual misstatements relating to the  
18 Court's Sentencing Guidelines calculations and determination of  
19 sentence, and (c) argue on appeal and collateral review that the  
20 Court's Sentencing Guidelines calculations and the sentence it  
21 chooses to impose are not error, although each party agrees to  
22 maintain its view that the calculations in paragraph 17 are  
23 consistent with the facts of this case. While this paragraph permits  
24 both the USAO and defendant to submit full and complete factual  
25 information to the United States Probation and Pretrial Services  
26 Office and the Court, even if that factual information may be viewed  
27 as inconsistent with the facts agreed to in this agreement, this  
28

1 paragraph does not affect defendant's and the USAO's obligations not  
2 to contest the facts agreed to in this agreement.

3 26. Defendant understands that even if the Court ignores any  
4 sentencing recommendation, finds facts or reaches conclusions  
5 different from those agreed to, and/or imposes any sentence up to the  
6 maximum established by statute, defendant cannot, for that reason,  
7 withdraw defendant's guilty plea, and defendant will remain bound to  
8 fulfill all defendant's obligations under this agreement. Defendant  
9 understands that no one -- not the prosecutor, defendant's attorney,  
10 or the Court -- can make a binding prediction or promise regarding  
11 the sentence defendant will receive, except that it will be within  
12 the statutory maximum.

13 NO ADDITIONAL AGREEMENTS

14 27. Defendant understands that, except as set forth herein,  
15 there are no promises, understandings, or agreements between the USAO  
16 and defendant or defendant's attorney, and that no additional  
17 promise, understanding, or agreement may be entered into unless in a  
18 writing signed by all parties or on the record in court.

19 //

20 //

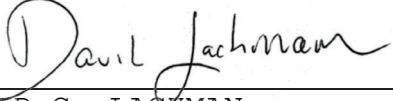
PLEA AGREEMENT PART OF THE GUILTY PLEA HEARING

28. The parties agree that this agreement will be considered part of the record of defendant's guilty plea hearing as if the entire agreement had been read into the record of the proceeding.

AGREED AND ACCEPTED


UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE  
FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF  
CALIFORNIA

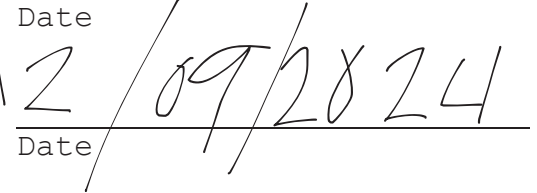
E. MARTIN ESTRADA  
United States Attorney


  
\_\_\_\_\_  
DAVID C. LACHMAN  
Assistant United States Attorney

12/10/2024

Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
STEVE JAIMES  
Defendant

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
ELENA SADOWSKY  
Deputy Federal Public Defender  
Attorney for Defendant  
STEVE JAIMES

12/10/24

Date

CERTIFICATION OF DEFENDANT


I have read this agreement in its entirety. I have had enough time to review and consider this agreement, and I have carefully and thoroughly discussed every part of it with my attorney. I understand the terms of this agreement, and I voluntarily agree to those terms. I have discussed the evidence with my attorney, and my attorney has advised me of my rights, of possible pretrial motions that might be filed, of possible defenses that might be asserted either prior to or at trial, of the sentencing factors set forth in 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a), of relevant Sentencing Guidelines provisions, and of the consequences of entering into this agreement. No promises, inducements, or representations of any kind have been made to me other than those contained in this agreement. No one has threatened or forced me in any way to enter into this agreement. I am satisfied with the representation of my attorney in this matter, and I am pleading guilty because I am guilty of the charge and wish to take advantage of the promises set forth in this agreement, and not for any other reason.

STEVE JAIMES  
Defendant

Date

CERTIFICATION OF DEFENDANT'S ATTORNEY

I am STEVE JAIMES's attorney. I have carefully and thoroughly discussed every part of this agreement with my client. Further, I have fully advised my client of his rights, of possible pretrial motions that might be filed, of possible defenses that might be asserted either prior to or at trial, of the sentencing factors set forth in 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a), of relevant Sentencing Guidelines provisions, and of the consequences of entering into this agreement. To my knowledge: no promises, inducements, or representations of any kind have been made to my client other than those contained in this agreement; no one has threatened or forced my client in any way to enter into this agreement; my client's decision to enter into this agreement is an informed and voluntary one; and the factual basis set forth in this agreement is sufficient to support my client's entry of a guilty plea pursuant to this agreement.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
ELENA SADOWSKY  
Deputy Federal Public Defender  
Attorney for Defendant  
STEVE JAIMES

12/10/24

Date